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20¹⁸ 24. (Amended) The nucleic acid of claim ~~12~~¹⁸, wherein said nucleic acid comprises an open reading frame that encodes a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO: [22] 16 or its complement, or a mutant or variant thereof.

21¹⁸ 25. (Amended) The nucleic acid of claim ~~12~~¹⁸, wherein said nucleic acid encodes a polypeptide comprising an amino acid of SEQ ID NO: [22] 16 or its complement.

22²⁰ 26. (Amended) The nucleic acid of claim ~~14~~²⁰ wherein the nucleic acid encodes a mature form of a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is SEQ ID NO: [22] 16.

23²¹ 27. (Amended) The nucleic acid of claim ~~15~~²¹ wherein said nucleic acid encodes a polypeptide comprising an amino acid of SEQ ID NO: [22] 16, a mutant or variant thereof.

24²⁸ 28. An oligonucleotide sequence that is complementary to and hybridizes under stringent conditions with the nucleic acid of claim ~~12~~¹⁸, a variant or mutant thereof.

25²⁹ 29. (Amended) The oligonucleotide sequence of claim ~~18~~²⁹ which is complementary to at least a portion of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: [21] 15, its complement, or a mutant or variant thereof.

26²⁰ 30. An isolated nucleic acid comprising a nucleotide sequence complementary to at least a portion of a nucleic acid according to claim ~~14~~²⁰.

27²¹ 31. A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim ~~12~~¹⁸.

28²² 32. A cell comprising the vector of claim ~~31~~²⁷.

29²¹ 33. (Amended) The cell of claim ~~32~~²⁸ wherein said cell is a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell comprising the nucleic acid sequence which is SEQ ID NO: [21] 15, its complement, or a mutant or variant thereof.

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B15 30

84. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the nucleic acid of claim ~~72~~¹⁸ and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

B16 31

85. (Amended) A process for producing a polypeptide encoded by the nucleic acid of claim ~~72~~¹⁸, said process comprising:

- providing [the] a cell comprising a vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim [82] ~~72~~;
- culturing said cell under conditions sufficient to express said polypeptide; and
- recovering said polypeptide,
thereby producing said polypeptide.

B17 32

86. The process of claim ~~85~~³¹ wherein said cell is a prokaryotic or eukaryotic cell.

B18 33

87. A process for identifying a compound that binds the nucleic acid of claim ~~72~~¹⁸, the process comprising:

- contacting said nucleic acid with a compound; and
- determining whether said compound binds said nucleic acid sequence.

B19 34

88. The compound identified by the process of claim ~~87~~³³.

Pursuant to 37 CFR §§1.121(c), a clean version of the claims is attached as pages 94-95 in the substitute specification.

REMARKS

Upon entry of the above amendments, claims 72-88 will be pending. Amendments to the title, claims 72, 74-77, 79 and 83 and to the abstract on page 96 are supported at least, e.g., in the specification as originally filed at page 14, lines 4-19. Claims 85 was amended to remove multiple dependency, and is supported by claims 81 and 82 as filed.